2:Richards E-5 (1930-1934)1939
FQ5 Bemba FQ5

to the different sexes, the matter becomes important from a nutritional point of view.

It may be said at once that the food taboo proper is not widely observed among these Central African people. The Bemba tribe is divided into clans named after various animals or plants, but in no case are totemic food taboos kept. In fact, in some cases the clan name is that of one of the staple foods of the tribe (Besa—an archaic name for millet; Boa, or 'mushroom'). Nor does there seem to be any food tabooed to one sex or the other, or considered appropriate to any particular time of life. Certain individuals regularly abstain from one or more types of relish. Such restrictions may be the result of an order given by a native doctor who may make a cure conditional on the regular observance of a food taboo, or it may follow the individual's own conviction that a particular food eaten on some memorable occasion has brought him ill luck and is therefore likely to do so again. In some cases one whole family (*ubupuo*) may avoid one type of relish, but it is impossible to decide in these instances whether the individuals have a natural antipathy to one food or the other, or whether the taboo is based entirely on magic grounds.

Another set of taboos are observed by chiefs, in this case entirely on animal food, and dependent on the belief in the magic properties of the animal. Animals with prominent lower teeth are unlucky. They are known as *ifinkuli* (sing. *icinkuli*)—the name given to children whose lower teeth have come through before their upper, and who used to be destroyed on this account. Such animals include the bush-pig, the wart-hog, the zebra, and the eland. The bush-buck is also taboo to a chief because it has a mottled skin and makes a choking noise, and is therefore believed to bring danger or leprosy and bronchial troubles. The flesh of the bush-pig is also considered unsuitable since it darts from side to side, and this it is said might disturb the judgements of the chief. For similar magic reasons, pregnant women must avoid the flesh of the bush-buck, 'Because it is mottled. Does she want her child to be striped?'[1] But it must be stated at once that the pregnancy taboos are not nearly so numerous as among other African and Melanesian peoples, and both the taboos observed by the chiefs and by pregnant women are restrictions not on one type of food—vegetable or animal—but on one particular species of vegetable

[1] She must also avoid the *ifinkuli* and the wild cat.

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shillings in money. It was the labour of the son-in-law over a certain period of years that was the essential tie uniting the families bound in marriage. In the majority of cases this is still so at the present day, though the changes produced by the absence of many young sons-in-law at the mines will have to be described.

The Secondary Groupings—the Matrilineal Descent Group.

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The matrilineal descent group can never be the chief principle of local association in a society that practises matrilocal marriage, permanent or temporary. Among the Bemba a man is legally identified with his mother's lineage group. To this descent group belong his mother (*nyina*, plur. *banyina*), her brothers (*nalume*, plur. *banalume*) and sisters (*banyina*), and the latter's children (*umunyina*, plur. *bamunyina*); his own brothers (*munyina*) and sisters (*nkashi*), and the latter's children (*umuipwa*, plur. *bepwa*); and, two generations below him, the children of his sisters' daughters (*umwashikulu* plur. *bashikulu*), who also belong to his clan. In this group the women members remain very closely associated throughout life. The girl lives with her mother and sisters during girlhood and early married years. She may continue to do so all her life. At any rate she constantly returns to visit her mother even if she is officially settled in her husband's village after some years of marriage. She summons her mother, and probably her sisters, to spend long weeks with her, especially if the birth of a child is expected. But the rule of matrilocal marriage naturally divides the men of the matrilineal descent group from the women, at any rate during their youth and early manhood. A young man normally lives neither with his father's people nor his mother's, but in the village of his bride. It is only if he has contracted a marriage within the village in which he was brought up, that he will remain associated with his sisters and parents. Neither the girl nor the boy necessarily live in the village of their mother's brother (*nalume*), who is their legal guardian, unless something has happened to break up the matrilocal family group into which they were born, or unless the boy has married his cross-cousin (*umufyala*, plur. *bafyala*) and therefore the mother's brother becomes a father-in-law (*shifyala*, plur. *bashifyala*).[1]

Nevertheless, the ties uniting the matrilineal descent group remain very strong and, as I stated, determine residence, in some

[1] Both types of cross-cousin marriage are practised.

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instances. This is especially the case with the brother-sister relationship in which the emotional and legal bond is very close. A man calls his sister by a special term—*nkashi*—to distinguish her from his classificatory sister whom he calls *munyinane* (plur. *bamunyinane*). A woman calls her brother *ndume* as distinct from her classificatory brother, whom she refers to also as *munyinane*. Both usually speak of this relationship in what struck me as a specially sentimental tone of voice. Natives seem to take pleasure in describing the brother's duty to look after (*ukurunga*) his sister, and say as a reason for this obligation that 'the man and the woman were born together from the same womb'.[1] The relationship is the subject of many proverbs and folk-tales in which the brother and sister are represented as succouring each other. In daily life, the man is on easy terms with his sister, particularly in the case of the royal family, where the interests of the two are specially identical. In Bemba society where there is a very even balance between patrilineal and matrilineal kinship there are two possible legal guardians for a woman, her father, or her mother's brother. After her father's death her brother takes the latter's place if he is old enough. Otherwise the mother's brother will look after her. Either brother, or mother's brother, will protect her if her husband dies, and defend her interests, if necessary, during the latter's life.[2] In the old days it was apparently quite common for an elderly woman to return to her brother's village to settle there in her old age and this she was able to do even if her husband remained alive by providing one of the brother's daughters as a substitute wife—*mpokolishi*—in her place. Nowadays, besides the older women, younger women, widowed, divorced or deserted by husbands away at the mines, put themselves similarly under the protection of their elder brothers, and the phrase *Aya kuli ndume*—'she has gone to her brother'—signifies the return of the woman to her own matrilineal descent group.

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[538]

The brother and sister also exert reciprocal rights over each other's children. In the old days the *nalume* had supreme power over his sister's son, and could even offer him as a slave in compensation for some irreparable injury he had committed to a

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[1] *Bafyelwe pamo mumifumo limo.*

[2] If the brother is younger than the sister the position is reversed and I have found a young man with no obvious male guardian alive, living at the elder sister's village, having contracted a marriage there at her suggestion.

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601 third party. He could send for him to accompany him to war
604 or to make a long journey at the chief's bidding. Case histories
614 of older Bemba show frequent instances of men having settled in villages far from their original birthplace because they had 'followed their *nalume*' on some distant expedition in warrior days and had remained there. Nowadays the *nalume* can only exert these powers if he is of superior status to the father, or if the latter is away, or dead. The *nalume* has also certain rights over his maternal niece—also called *umwipwa*. He is consulted about her marriage and usually given a share of her marriage payment (*mpango*), which is technically speaking 'eaten' by the father.[1]

177 Direct European teaching and the introduction of a money
604 currency have strengthened the father's authority over his children
593 as against those of the mother's brother. The former pays tax for the household, buys the children's clothes, and pays the school fees. But, on the other hand, marriage is less stable under modern conditions, partly owing to the break-down of marriage morality and partly to the absence of so many men at the mines. In these circumstances, those few men who remain in the villages are bound to look after their sisters' children as well as their own in the last resort.

601 The paternal aunt, the *nyina senge*, also has rights over her
604 brother's children and particularly his daughters. She is believed
614 to have power to bless or curse her brother's daughter (*umwana senge*) with fertility or barrenness, and is much feared on that account.[2] In the old days she could demand her niece as a substitute wife for her husband—the *mpokoleshi* marriage described on p. 115, or as an additional one.[3] But the rights and duties of the *nyina senge* do not determine the residence of her *bepwa*, male and female, to any extent. However, it must be remembered
582 that cross-cousin marriages unite the households of brother and sister even more intimately than before, and that where the boy marries his *nyina senge's* daughter, he will go to live in her village, just as he who contracts a union with his *nalume's* child, goes to live in the latter's community. The sample village analysed

[1] This custom, an act of grace to the *nalume*—not his right, has become more important nowadays since money from 2*s.* 6*d.* to £1 has been substituted for the two bark-cloths given as *mpango* in the old days.

[2] And also given a share of the *mpango* if possible.

[3] Nowadays this right seems to be rarely exerted. I only met three cases of its occurrence.

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in Chap. X shows a number of such cross-cousin marriages uniting the children of brothers and sisters together and the proportion of marriages of this type in Bemba society is 30 per cent. according to my figures.

Hence in any Bemba village it is common to find the headman, and the other elders of the community, responsible for the welfare of the two types of group—a primary matrilocal extended family composed of a man's wife, his daughters and their husbands, his granddaughters and their husbands, and possibly his wife's mother, and a secondary matrilineal descent group composed of a widowed or deserted sister and her children married or unmarried, or her grandchildren. In each case his duties may extend to relatives in the classificatory degree if these are left destitute, or to kinsfolk of the headman's predecessor in the same degree, i.e. mother, sister, daughter. His relationship to the members of the two groups may be represented thus and his pattern of behaviour to each entirely different:

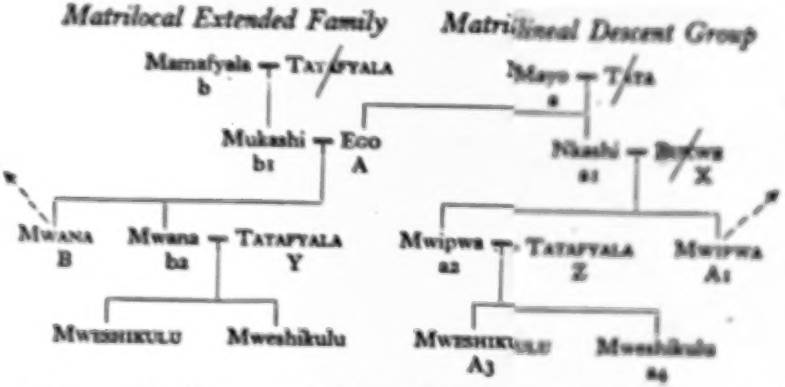

Diagram: N.B. Men represented by capital letters; women by small type; a line through a name represents death; an arrow means residence in another community. A is here head of:

(*a*) his own matrilocal extended family in which his daughter b2 marries and remains in his village and his son B marries elsewhere. He is also supporting his widowed mother-in-law (b);

(*b*) the female relatives of his matrilineal descent group: his mother a, his sister a1, whose husband X is dead and whose daughter a2 is married in the village, while her son A1 has married outside. By cross-cousin marriages between A1 and b2 or B and a2 these two men would have remained in the village.

Mayo = my mother
Mukashi = my wife
Tata = my father
Bukwe = my brother-in-law or in-law generally

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Nkashi = my sister
Mwishikulu = my grandchild
Tatafyala = my son-in-law, father-in-law, maternal niece's husband
Manafyala = my mother-in-law
Umwipwa = my maternal niece or nephew
Umwana = my son or daughter

Additional Households.

Besides the relatives for whom he has the strongest responsibility, there are a number of other kinsfolk who may join a headman and accept his authority. These are, roughly speaking, of two types: (*a*) destitute persons, chiefly women, who want his support, or (*b*) relatives of either sex who are not necessarily in poor circumstances, but who may be attracted by an elder relative's personal popularity or rank to settle with him. These latter may include young men whose normal male guardian is dead, or middle-aged men who want to settle somewhere temporarily, until their own personal following has become big enough for them to risk setting up a community of their own. These additional households may include in the first category, widows of the headman's *nsalume*, whom he is bound to inherit or else support; poor relations of his wife, or women who claim the term of grandmother, mother, sister, cross-cousin, or granddaughter but are only distantly related. The second group may consist of male relatives of the matrilineal descent group—younger brothers, maternal nephews, cross-cousins, or grandsons—who have chosen to return to live with him after their period of matrilocal marriage is at an end, or, if the headman is a man of high position, his own sons—almost invariably the case at the court of a chief where the 'sons of the chief' (*bana bamfumu*) have a regularly established position at the capital, bring their wives to live with them, and rival the maternal nephews, the rightful heirs, for favours. Nowadays, clerks earning good money in European employment are similarly able to attract their sons to settle with them, and the statement *aya kuli wishi* ('he has gone to his father') or even *atemwa kuli wishi* ('he likes his father') may cause some comment, but no surprise at the present day. Thus, the presence of the father-son grouping in a Bemba village occurs, however infrequently, although such an association seems to run directly counter to the rules of legal affiliation. Grandsons either through the daughter or through the son also tend to join a grandfather of rank or position.

2:Richards E-5 (1930-1934)1939
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CHAPTER VIII

THE DOMESTIC UNIT

Daughter Households.

252 IF the kinship of the women who regularly thresh and grind together be studied, it will be found that they mostly stand in the mother-daughter, grandmother-granddaughter or sister-sister relationship—that they are in fact the women of the matrilocal group. Among the Bemba, joint domestic activities are based on the kinship of the women householders, not that of the men as in patrilocal communities. These closely related women form a co-operating group—grandmother, mothers, and daughters with the grandfather at their head. The young man who marries into the group is in fact almost an outsider during his first few years of wedded life and only gradually acquires economic control over his household, let alone the right of choice of residence, or power to remove his children to his own village. The cattle handed over as *lobola* to the bride's father in South Africa are described as a permanent guarantee of the good behaviour of the married couple towards each other, but among the Bemba the bridegroom has to work for some years in a position of economic dependence in order to prove his worth as a husband or father at all, and during this time his wife can be removed if he fails to carry out his obligations. The bride and bridegroom at marriage have no food-supply of their own. On his betrothal a youth goes to live in his bride's village.[1] He cuts gardens for his father-in-law, directly under the latter's orders, and does any other work, such as hoeing, that may be required of him.[2] He builds himself his own hut, which his future bride, possibly a young girl of 10 or 12, sweeps and tidies for him, and in which she is later allowed to go and sleep until signs of approaching puberty make her mother afraid she

[1] The following description applies to the system of marriage apparently practised before the coming of the white man, and still observed with certain modifications in the majority of cases. The changes caused by the introduction of money payments for service and by the absence of the young men at the mines will be discussed separately.

[2] Chiefly the tree-cutting preparatory to making millet gardens. A son-in-law always describes his own marriage as, 'I cut trees for him for so many years', and the money sent back to his father-in-law by a youth at the mines is called 'money for tree-cutting' (*ndalama shya kutema*)—now about 10s. a year.

[p. 124]

3: Richards E-5 (1930-1934)1956
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622 There was no permanent property to bind a man to one area rather than another and men moved easily to live with one relative or another. The headman's prime difficulty was in fact to persuade relatives to join him or if they had already done so to persuade these kinsmen not to leave him!

The headman could command small gifts in tribute and a little service. He also had a shrine to his own personal ancestors and performed ceremonies for the good of the village. He purified the village by an act of ritual intercourse with his chief wife and his fire was regarded as the fire of the village.

644 Princesses had an important part to play in the political system. The mother of the Citimukulu was known as the Candamukulu and she ruled over a small territory in the king's district and was thus in the position of sub-chief to him. The same was true of another royal princess, the Mukukamfumu who also had a sub-chieftainship in her own right. Both these princesses had important ritual functions to perform in tribal ceremonies.

614 173 The Bemba are organized in matrilineal clans distinguished by totemic observances, stereotyped forms of greeting between clan members, joking relationships with paired and opposite clans,[1] and honorific titles. Clan members reckon descent from a common ancestress and her brother, and they tell the legendary tale of the first arrival of these forebears in the country. They remember the villages where their ancestors first settled, although neither the clan nor any of its subdivisions can be regarded as localized groups at the present day. Clans are ranked in some kind of precedence, according to the order in which their ancestors are thought to have arrived in the country from the west.

611 769 Within the clan great emphasis is laid on the principle of matrilineal descent. Ancestors are remembered in prayers before the shrine of a head of a family. Here a man will pray to the spirit of his maternal grandfather or maternal uncle, if the latter is already dead. The spirit of a maternal ancestor is thought to quicken the child in its mother's womb and to protect it all its life. The name of this ancestor or ancestress is discovered by [553] divination, and given to the child. When a man dies his name, his

[1] See my 'Reciprocal clan relationships among the Bemba of North-Eastern Rhodesia', in *Man*, vol. XXXVII, 1937.

Social Structure

When a man dies his name, his kinship duties and his hereditary bow are passed on to his sister's son or to her grandson through a daughter. The heir actually becomes the dead man in a social sense: he adopts the kinship terms the latter used, calling, for instance, 'maternal nephew' the person he would previously have called 'brother'. The same positional succession takes place in the matrilineal line for women, and a dead woman will be replaced by her sister or a maternal granddaughter. In this system women are honoured as the bearers of many children and such a woman is said to found a house.

In the case of the royal crocodile clan the maintenance of descent is even more important. All senior chieftainships in Lubemba, the country of the Bemba, are held by members of the royal lineage.

A successor to such a chieftainship has access to 'great spirits', those of his dead predecessors, and he not only prays to them at the sacred shrines in his capital, but he acquires supernatural powers in his own person, so that he can bless and curse. His good health and vitality bring blessings to the community, and his ill-health or death, the reverse.

Princesses have the special duty to bear fine children in order to provide the country with chiefs, and they are honoured for doing so. The spirits of royal women are mentioned in prayer in tender and grateful terms as 'those who carried us in skins on their backs and gave us suck'. The first ancestress, Bwalya Cabala, is buried in a grove which is one of the most sacred places in Lubemba.[1]

Bemba clans are not segmentary. The effective kinship group within the clan is a three or four generation group, the men and women who trace their descent to a common great-grandmother and who remember a village of origin (*cifulo*). These are not corporate matrilineages in any territorial sense. The kinship system makes for a great deal of movement from village to village during a man's or a woman's life. The villages themselves change in composition and move from place to place following the shifting cultivation.

There appear to be no fixed leaders of the matrilineage, except in the case of the royal dynasty, but this group is the unit of succession to the offices and the names of dead men and women and to their ancestral spirits.

[1] Cf. *Land, Labour and Diet in Northern Rhodesia*, p. 357.

widely reputed for their iron-working, when during the recent war tools became scarce. It is rarely found among the Bemba. Village smiths able to reforge and sharpen axe-blades and hoes are, however, common all over the area. The Unga obtained iron blades for their fish-spears from the Mukulu. 325

Wood-carving, highly developed among the Congo peoples, is limited among the Bemba to the simplest geometric designs, but Von Rosen noted some elaborate and rather striking carving among the Twa.(1) Weaving is unknown among the Bemba, and is not reported elsewhere. Baskets are generally made well but are not elaborate. For a fishing group the Unga have little variety in baskets and these again are simply made. A certain amount of leather-work is made by the Bemba. Both cooking and eating pots are made all over the plateau, but although they are well made they tend to be badly fired and hence to be fragile. 322 286 285 281 323

Salt-making flourishes particularly among the Shila and Tabwa, around Lake Mweru.(2) It is highly lucrative, compensates for the comparative infertility of the soil and provides a lively marketing activity. The salt is obtained by straining the soil through baskets and boiling the resultant brine. The salt-earth supply in the area is permanent and this tends to have a stabilizing effect upon villages, which would otherwise move frequently in accordance with the practice of shifting cultivation. The natural salt found in the pans at Mpika in Bemba country was also utilized and highly valued, being traded around the country to gratify the longing for salt in which the Bemba diet is singularly lacking. 317

SOCIAL ORGANIZATION AND POLITICAL STRUCTURE

KINSHIP

(a) *Matrilineal Descent* is one of the cultural characteristics of this area. Amongst all these people affiliation is traced through the mother and a man belongs to his mother's clan. Succession is within a loosely organised matrilineage of narrow span whereby a man is succeeded by his younger brothers or by his sisters' sons, or by his sisters' daughters' sons. These rules govern succession to chieftainship, to a headmanship, or to the name and status of a dead man by the practice known in this area as *ukupyanika*.(3) A woman usually succeeds to the name of her maternal grandmother and, in the case of a chieftainess, she succeeds to the title itself. Succession to a name is associated with the power to call on the ancestral spirits of the dead man or woman in question. 611

All the peoples described appear to be organized into matrilineal clans with totemic names. Among the Bemba, for instance, there are 40 or more such dispersed exogamous matrilineal clans. The clan claims descent from an original ancestress, a more or less legendary figure dating from the time of the first occupation of their present territory by the Bemba. Clan centres, in the sense of original villages of occupation, are remembered but 614

(1) Von Rosen, 1914. (2) Moore, 1937.
(3) Richards, 9, 1950, describes this as 'positional succession'.

614 it must be emphasized that the matriclans in this area are in no sense political or territorial groups. Through clan affiliation a man traces his descent, his rank, and, if he belongs to the royal clan, his right to succeed to chieftainship. In the old days substitution of men or women in the payment of blood revenge could take place within the clan. But no property is owned in common by the clan. There is neither joint occupation of land nor collective ritual activities. The distinguishing features of the Bemba clan are the name, praise-name and legends associated with the original ancestress and also, in some cases, with her brother.

554 614 616 Characteristic aspects of these Bemba clans are the hierarchy of status in which they are ranged and the reciprocity of paired clan relations. The former is based on the alleged priority of the arrival of clan ancestors in Bemba country and also proximity to the heart of the country. Highest in rank and forming the royal clan are the Crocodiles. This hierarchy is to be observed in other groups in the area, though the royal clans differ. Clan names, generally those of natural objects, animals, birds etc., have been called totemic, although there are few, if any, food taboos associated with them.(1) The words used are frequently archaic and are common to other groups in the area, e.g. Lamba, Kaonde, Lala. The story of their acquisition is the basis for the pairing of opposite clans. The clans paired seem to be those whose clan symbols are naturally antipathetic or complementary to one another, e.g., fish and crocodile, mushroom and rain. They are not paired systematically but often by purely arbitrary factors connecting the clan with several such partners.

616 764 582 602 Reciprocal functions of a paired clan are chiefly confined to funeral rites.(2) The *'banungwe'*, the name used reciprocally by members of paired clans, of a dead man's family both help and hinder at the burial ceremony. Ritually expressed, therefore, the traditional attitude between partners is one of hostility yet, as the complementary nature of the clan names often implies, one of service. Between partners there is ease and freedom of behaviour, privileges are taken and formerly, it is said, marriages between them were preferential. Briefly, reciprocal clan relationship among the Bemba implies ritual interdependence, partnership of rivals expressed in ritual, traditional joking and licence in daily relations and preferential marriage claims.(3)

613 [591] Within the Bemba clan a loosely organized group called "the house" (*inganda*) is recognised which is composed of the descendants of one woman. Richards points out that this matrilineage is in no sense a corporate group.(4) The members of the "house" trace descent to one woman and remember the village where this woman lived. They do not, however, live in one place since the rules of residence at marriage necessitate the scattering of both male and female members of the matrilineage throughout a number of villages. No property is owned in common by its members, nor is its senior male in a position of political authority, although he has certain powers over the women of the group and their children. This dispersed

(1) Richards, 6, 1939, p.62. Food taboos do exist among the Tabwa, see Vleugels J. 1948.
(2) Richards, 5, 1937.
(3) This is marked among the Tabwa. See Vleugels, op.cit.
(4) Richards, 9, 1950.

also have been employed. Household utensils and vessels were fashioned from wood and gourds. Bracelets and other ornaments were manufactured from copper-wire or copper bars purchased from the Nyamwezi who smelted copper in Katanga. The traditional arms were spear, assegai, *pocue* (the short, broad-bladed, two-edged Lunda sword) and battle-axe.(1) A defensive weapon was the square, lightwood shield said to be unpierceable after being soaked in water.(2). Bows and arrows were apparently not used in war.(3)

SOCIAL ORGANIZATION

CLAN ORGANIZATION(4)

The clan (*mukowa*) consists of persons, alive and dead, believed to be descended matrilineally from a common ancestor or ancestress, even though they may not be able to trace their ancestry. The clans, now dispersed, have each a traditional home, *ntulo* (a word also used for the source of a river), a common totemic name (usually the generic name of an animal or plant), and a common slogan, *ilumbo* (from *ukulumba*, to boast). In principle clans are exogamous but in fact this is not observed; the exogamous unit is the *cikota*, a subdivision of the clan. Each clan stands in a joking relationship (*bwali*) to one, or sometimes more than one other, with which its name is connected by an association of ideas. Examples of such paired clans are: the leopard and the goat (because leopards kill goats), the iron and the elephants (elephants were hunted with iron-headed spears), the mushroom and the ant-hill (mushrooms thrive on ant-hills). No preferential marriage obtains between the *bali* (persons in joking relationship) as is the case among the Bemba. In the mortuary ceremonies a special role is assigned to a *mwali* of the deceased. An isolated instance of an inter-clan avoidance pattern is provided by the Lion (*Bena Nkalamo*) and the Snake clans. Members of a clan are supposed to give hospitality to their fellow-clansmen whatever their tribal affiliation.

Clan organisation is believed to be universal and coeval with mankind. No mythical explanation of the origin of clans is offered. Religious or ritual cults are not practised on a clan basis. There is no prohibition against killing or eating the object from which the clan derives its name, nor, on the other hand, is any special veneration required.

The clans are not hierarchically organised though, in fact, some may enjoy greater prestige owing to their numerical strength or connections and others may be regarded as of little consequence, like the derided Pins and Needles clan. The clan to which the Kazembe's mother belongs is, for the duration of his reign, placed in a privileged position.

As a rule the clans have no specialised economic or ritual functions although the intervention of the Fish clan (*Bena Mpende*) is invoked when the water is too low for the salmon to reach their normal spawning grounds. No clan meetings are held.

(1) Valdez, op.cit., p.239.
(2) ibid.
(3) Burton, p.43.
(4) Based on information provided by I.G. Cunnison who is at present engaged on an intensive study of the Luapula peoples.

The fifty or so clans represented in the valley are part of a fairly uniform clan system which extends over the territories inhabited by the Bemba-, Luba- and Lamba-speaking peoples. The *Bena Mumba* (Clay clan) have their *ntulo* at Matanda in the upper valley of the Luapula, those of the *Bakosa* (Millipede clan) and the *Bena Mbushi* (Goat clan) are on the Lualaba; that of the *Bena Mfula* (Rain clan) is in the forest of Ngumbo on Lake Bangweulu. Originally, it is vaguely believed, all came from Kola (Angola?) 614

The *cikota* or *cisaka* is a segment of the clan, no longer localised, whose members gather to discuss *milandu* cases and to make decisions in matters of inheritance and succession. 613

Cikolwe ("big cock") is a term used to denote a common ancestor. It can be applied to the head, alive or dead, of a matrilineal descent group of any size, but usually refers to the ancestor or ancestress who broke away from the clan and led his extended family and followers from their clan *ntulo* to the valley.

Clan membership is not rigidly determined; it is usual to belong to one's mother's clan but it is possible to claim membership of any of the clans to which one's grandparents belonged. The descendants of the Lunda of Muata Yamvo remain patrilineal. The Luba from the Lualaba, who joined the Lunda and became Lundaised, were previously matrilineal. 611 614

TERRITORIAL ORGANIZATION AND SETTLEMENT

Villages were originally founded by the immigrant groups under the leadership of *fikolwe* (sing. *cikolwe*) many of whom were women. The nucleus of each group was formed by a single matrilineal descent group, *cikota*. In spite of inter-marriage and increasing spatial mobility, which tend to obliterate the original connection between the territorial and the kinship structure, villages are still identified by outsiders with their founding clans. 621

Village headmanship remains in the *cikota*. The headman succeeds to the office, the name, the wives, and the insignia (belt and gun or spear) of his predecessor. He has the charge of *nshipa*, the village medicine. A village is divided into wards, *fitente* (sing. *citente*), in which the households of close relatives are grouped together. [624]

Most of the old village sites in the *damboes* of the Luapula tributaries are now derelict. With the coming of the Pax Britannica and the development of cash sales of fish the villages moved closer to the river edge and now extend along the trunk road. New villages recognised by the government must number at least fifteen tax-payers. The average size of villages is 150-200 inhabitants. The capital has a population of 3,000.(1) 361 621

Formerly the huts were circular, grass-roofed, woven bamboo structures,(2) scattered amidst cassava plantations.(3) Nowadays the villages are more 342 361

1) The capital is usually referred to as Kazembe. It was moved south after the Yeke invasion. The old site is part of the territory settled by the Bemba after they had assisted Kazembe against the Yeke. The new site was previously known as Mwansabombwe.
2) Valdez, II, p.249; Burton, p.46. (3) Livingstone, I, p.248.

not because he happens to be one of a series of names. That is strictly speaking, but as I describe elsewhere the dichotomy of the branches and political considerations have kept the Nkula in one branch for two generations now. 551 622 643

This brings me to another interesting point connected with the break in the series of names. There was a chance that the series might have been Chitimukulu, Mwamba, Nkula in a direct unbroken line. Nkolemfumu Mbonkali D5 stated his intention of claiming the Nkula on the death of Bwalya Nkula IV D12. He contended, and quite rightly, that he was senior to Musungu Chikwanda D14 and could claim it. If he had succeeded we should have had the new series mentioned. A glance at line C2 and C3 shows that an Nkula had been immediately after a Mwamba in the table in the past too.

The fact that Mbonkali D5 did not get the Nkula was due to the same reason that Chikwanda III C6 was not followed by D1, 2, 3 or 4. That there was the desire to give the branch of Mukukamfumu one or more of the higher posts. That was the reason openly given in 1934 when Bwalya Nkula IV D12 died. Such a reason emphasises the dichotomy of families, and Dr. Richards' statement that certain chieftainships are being stabilised in certain branches of the family may be true in a limited way such as this. But it is a dangerous argument for the present junior branches to press because if carried to logical conclusions it would freeze such chieftainships as the Nkula and Shimumbi in their own lines and tend to imply that they could not leave them to pass to the Mwamba. The tendency to split as regards the Nkula branch only started one generation back in line C in the present lineage, and some of the arguments given in the last subsection against the promotion of the third branch of the family could equally well apply for the restricting of the second branch to its own line. However that is a matter that is the future concern of the Superior Native Authority and Government. 622

Nkula D14 would take the post of Mwamba because the salary is bigger and perhaps because the status is higher too. Nkula V D14 makes a great show at the moment of not waiting for intervening deaths but of claiming the Paramountcy direct after Chitimukulu Kanyanta D1. But, as a glance at the genealogical table proves, all he has the right to do is to follow after the present Mpepo D10 to whatever post that chief attains. Nkula's mother C8 was junior to the mother C5 of Nkolemfumu D6 and Mpepo D10, so that Nkula D14 is junior to them in the right of succession. [554]

(*d*) Conclusion.

There are one or two interesting explanations necessary to complete this description of the line to the Paramountcy. 643

The status of the three or four leading chiefs seems puzzling at times. The Mwamba has often fought against the Chitimukulu. The Nkula has not, but perhaps only because the Nkula is a comparatively recent post and has not had the necessary time to build up power. There are several occasions on which Nkula might have fought had there been no European administration to restrain him. 622 643 669

Generally speaking, as Dr. Richards indicates, authority, power and prerogatives depend upon descent and kinship and all branches of the royal clan can claim connection with the original family of which a traditional Chitimukulu was head. 643 [614]

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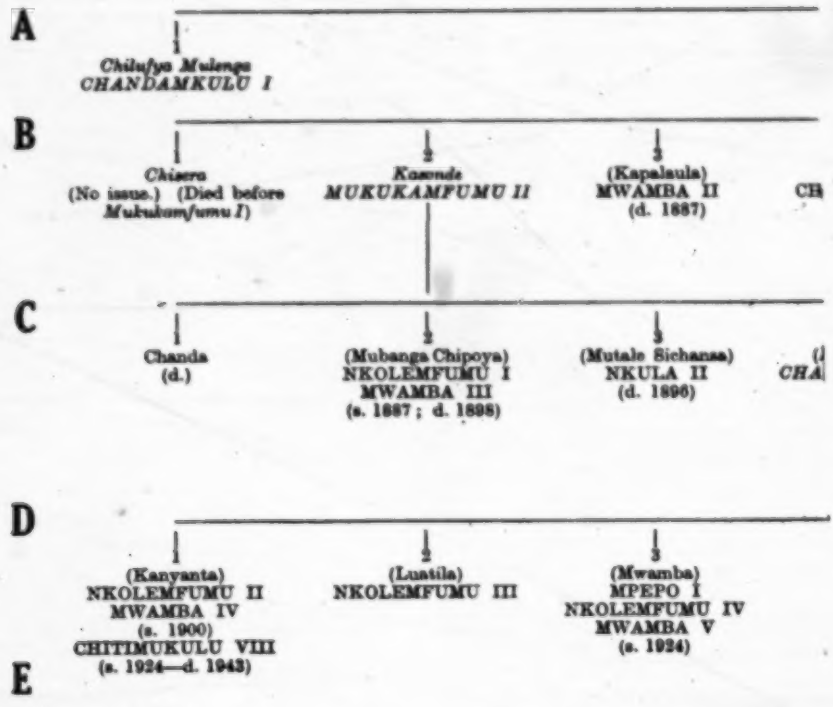

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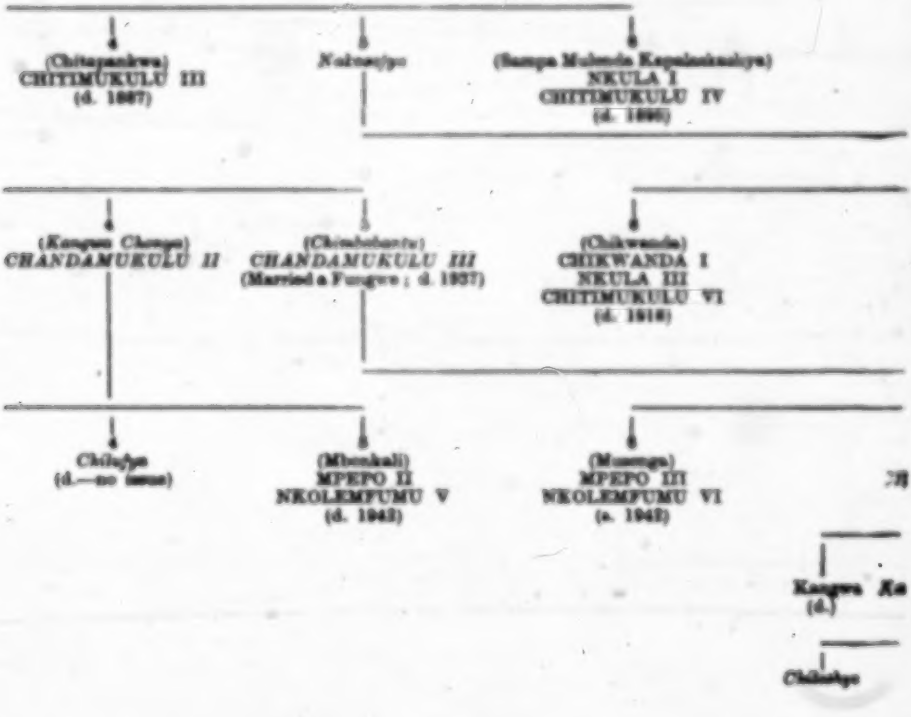

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THE BEMBA

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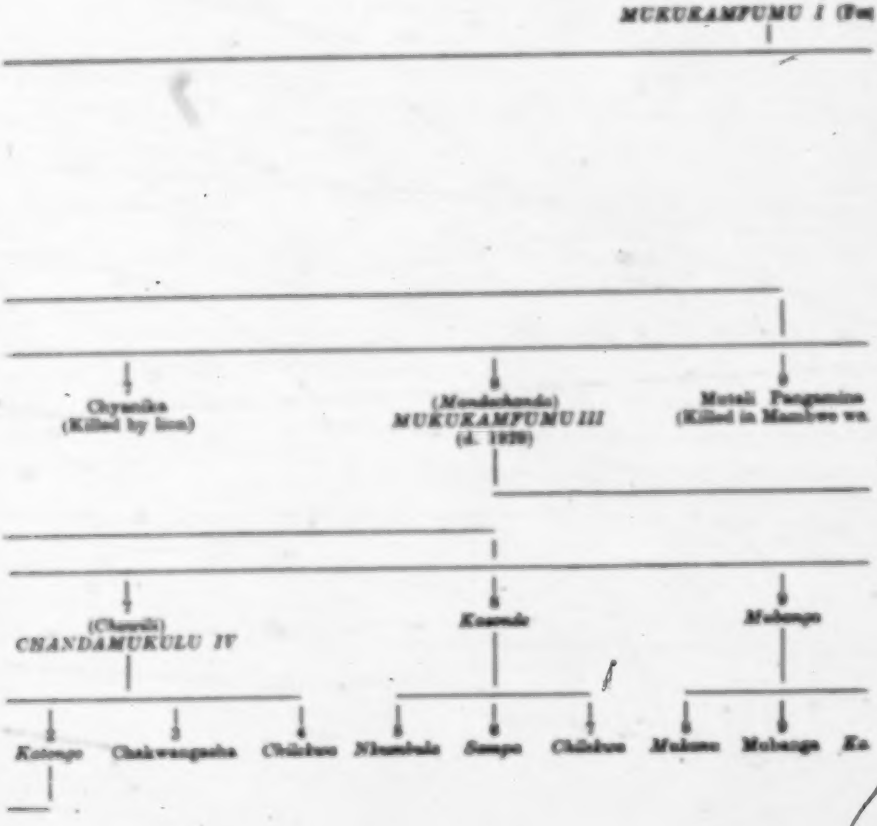

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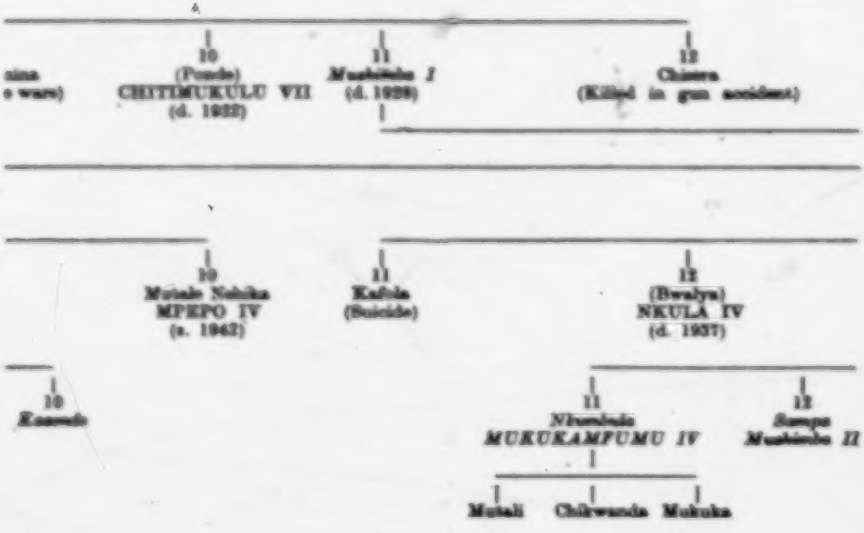

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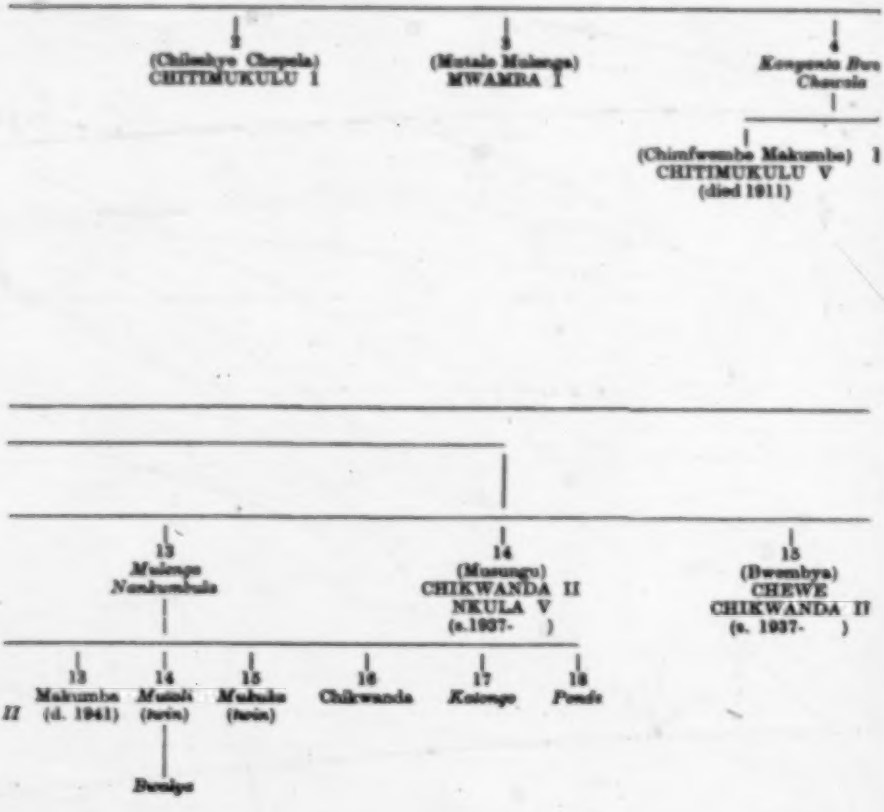

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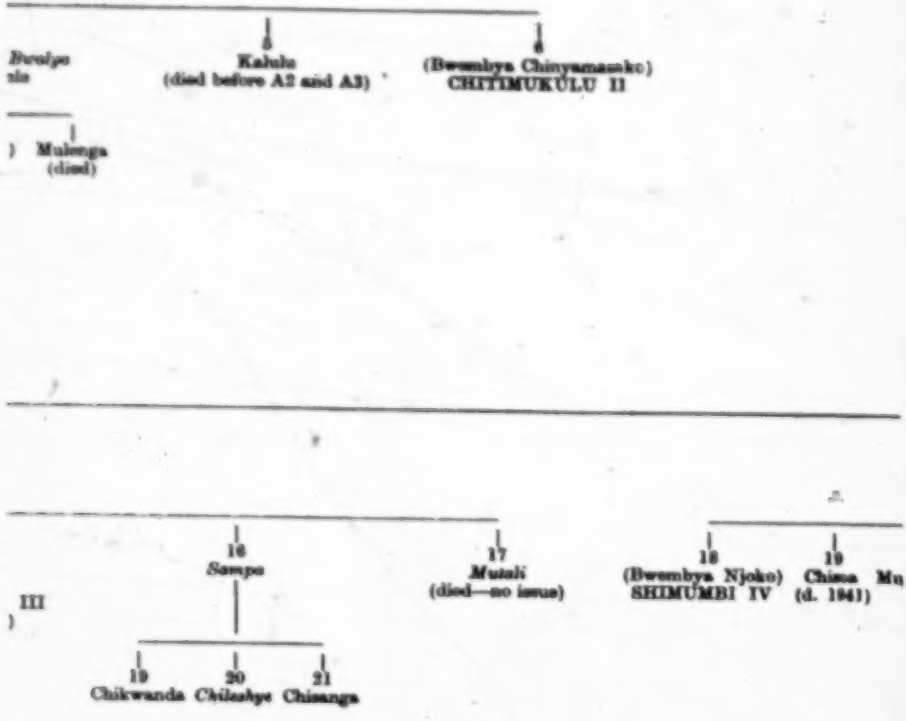

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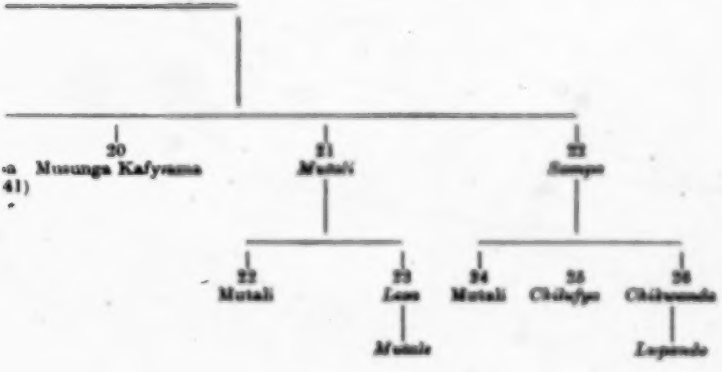

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7:Richards E-5 (1930-1934)1940 FQ5 Bemba FQ5

language (*Cibemba*), which forms a distinct dialect in native eyes, although it does not differ very considerably from the neighbouring *Cibisa* or *Cilala*. (*c*) The tribal mark, a vertical cut on each temple about 1 in. long behind the eyes. (*d*) The common historical traditions of the people—even young men at the present day speak with pride of the coming of their fathers from Luba-land, and take delight in describing the military exploits of their ancestors and the ferocity of the old chiefs. (*e*) Their allegiance to a common paramount chief, the Citimukulu, whose overlordship of the Bemba territory is unquestioned.

(*b*) *Social Grouping*. (1) *Kinship*. The Bemba are a matrilineal tribe practising matrilocal marriage. Descent is reckoned through the mother and a man is legally identified with a group of relatives composed of his maternal grandmother and her brothers and sisters, his mother and her brothers and sisters, and his own brothers and sisters. His membership of this group determines his succession to different offices and his status in the community, although in a matrilocal society it only occasionally determines his residence. He also belongs to a wider descent group, the clan (*umukoa*, plur. *imikoa*) which is also traced in the woman's line. Each *umukoa* is distinguished by the name of an animal, plant, or natural phenomenon, such as rain. It has a legend of origin usually describing the split-off of the clan ancestors from the original lineage group, and an honorific title or form of greeting. Clans are in effect exogamous, since a man may not marry a woman he calls 'mother', 'sister', or 'daughter', and these terms are extended to the limits of clan membership on the maternal side. Through his clan affiliation, a man traces his descent, rank —if he belongs to the royal clan—rights to succeed to certain offices, such as hereditary councillorship (cf. pp. 100, 108), and claims to his relatives' help and hospitality.

Some clans have a higher status than others, according to whether their original ancestors arrived in the country as part of the following of the first Citimukulu, or alternatively, split off as a separate descent group later. Thus the crocodile clan (*Bena ŋandu*) is the *umukoa* of the first immigrant chief and stands highest in status (cf. 'Rank'), while various others, such as the fish clan, millet clan, &c., are said to be of similar antiquity. The hereditary councillors described later belong to these clans. All the *imikoa* are paired with opposite clans that perform reciprocal ritual

7:Richards E-5 (1930-1934)1940 FQ5 Bemba FQ5

duties for each other, but this form of social grouping does not seem to affect the political organization at all at the present day.[1]

Within the clan, smaller lineage groups are recognized. These have no distinct name; though the Bemba often refer to them as 'houses' (*amaianda*, sing. *iyanda*) of the same clan. Such a house consists of the direct descendants of one particular ancestress traced back to three or four generations—five at the most. Within this smaller descent group, succession to office is usually limited, and chieftainships tend to become hereditary within three or four generations in such lines.[2] Social replacement of one man for another, either as an heir, an officiant in a religious ceremony, in fulfilment of a marriage contract (in the case of a woman), or in compensation for blood guilt in the old days, tends and tended to take place within the 'house' and not the clan, though members of the *amaka* do replace each other if there is no one more nearly related within the *iyanda* to do so.

It is the smaller descent-group which is important in considering the influence of the ancestral spirits (*imipashi*, sing. *umupashi*) over the living, either as affecting the welfare of their descendants in general or as entering the wombs of pregnant women of that descent-group to act as guardian spirits to the children as yet unborn.

Apart from the descent-group that determines his status, there is the body of kinsmen with whom a Bemba co-operates actively in daily life. These are the people with whom he may choose to live, and who gather together at any important event in his life, such as marriage, the birth of a child, illness, or a death. This group is known by a distinct term, the *ulupwa*. It has a bilateral basis, since it is composed of the near relatives on both sides of the family and also relatives in law. The balance between the powers of the maternal and paternal relatives is a very even one in Bemba society, in spite of the legal emphasis on the matrilineal side, and the ties uniting the members of the *ulupwa* are very strong.[3] Though it is

[1] cf. my 'Reciprocal Clan Relationships among the Bemba of North-Eastern Rhodesia', *Man*, December, 1937.

[2] The late Nkula, Bwalya Cangala, claimed, in the course of a succession dispute, that his near relatives, the children of his grandmother, Nakassafye, must now be considered as a separate 'house', as distinct from the children and grandchildren of her sister, Mukukamfumu II (cf. chart on p. 102).

[3] cf. my 'Mother-right in Central Africa' in *Essays presented to C. G. Seligman* (1934).

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616 171

222 Opposite clans performing reciprocal ritual duties and standing in a joking relationship to each other have been reported among several of the Central Bantu tribes,[1] but the distribution of this type of clan organisation in Central and East Africa is as yet unknown, and the whole phenomenon has never been fully described to my knowledge. I am therefore publishing the following notes on the *Bawangwe*,[2] or opposite clans of the Bemba of N.E. Rhodesia in the hope of eliciting further comparative information on the subject.

● 614 The Bemba are divided into forty or more exogamous matrilineal clans (*wakwa*) tracing descent through the mother to some original ancestor or ancestress, a more or less legendary figure dating from the time of the first occupation of the present territory of the Bemba two

[1] *Cf. Awalonga* of the Lamba. C. Dale, *The Lambas of N. Rhodesia*, 1931, p. 197, and the *Bawangwe* of the Bakaonde. F. H. Melland, *In Witch-bound Africa*, 1923, pp. 251–53.

[2] E. B. H. Goodall, late Provincial Commissioner of the Ndola area, wrote a short descriptive note on the *Bawangwe* in *Some Wemba Words*, 1931, p. 75, and I would like here to pay tribute to the value of the ethnological material contained in this small vocabulary. It must be only a fraction of the author's very wide knowledge of Bemba customs, of which his recent sudden death deprived us. *Cf.* also my reference to the *Bawangwe* in 'Preliminary Notes on the Babemba of N.E. Rhodesia,' *Bantu Studies*, September, 1933.

[p. 188(B)]

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614 to three hundred years ago. Membership of a *mukoa* determines a man's legal affiliation, his descent, and his succession to the name and status of dead relatives, or to particular offices, ritual or political. It gives him certain rights to hospitality and support.

614 The distinguishing mark of clan membership
186 is the use of the *mukoa* name. A man describes
195 himself as a *muvina* (plural *bena*) or a member of such and such a clan (*e.g.*, *muvina nkulamo*, a member of the lion clan).[1] Besides its title the clan possesses its own 'praise-names,' to give the English term used for such honorific terms of address as the *Sibongo* of the Southern Bantu. These praise-names are phrases making reference, usually in boastful language, to the names of the first, or most famous ancestors of the clan, or mentioning an incident in its early history, or the attributes considered to belong to its members. Such sentences are used in
[537] greetings, in jokes between members of different clans, or in public declamations before a *mukoa* head on some ceremonial occasion, usually at the court of the Paramount chief. The *mukoa*

[1] The same word *muvina* is used to describe the subject of a chief, the inhabitant of a district, or the consort of a man or woman. In the western part of the district and in the Katanga area of the Belgian Congo, *Bena* is used to preface tribal names as distinct from clan names, *e.g.*, *Bena Cishinga* in the Bangweolu district, or the *Bena Kalundwe* in the Katanga area, *cf.* E. Verhulpen, *Baluba et Balubaises*, 1936.

[p. 188(C)]

614 186 195 praise-names are very similar to those shouted in honour of a chief on formal occasions or used as titles of address to him, and these phrases, preserved exactly in traditional form, and often expressed in archaic language, appear to be characteristic of Bantu chieftainship and clan system. Malinowski has shown in a typical Melanesian society how the myths of a clan origin, 'owned' and recounted by its members, form a recognized charter for the exercise of legal privileges such as rights of occupation of land or ritual prerogatives, and it is quite [173] probable that among Bantu, where myths, in the sense of tales of the miraculous doings of clan heroes are rare, yet the recitation of the names of clan or chiefly ancestors, the repetition of stories of their lives, or the shouting of a key sentence or proverb from such tales may fulfil very similar sociological functions.

614 [616] It is the name of the Bemba *mukoa* and the story of its acquisition by a special lineage group that provides the basis for the pairing of opposite clans, or *banungwe*. The clan names are those of a variety of objects, animal, plants, meteorological phenomena such as rain, parts of the human body, and even cultural activities such as funeral lamentations. [192] The most common are the following:—crocodile (*ngandu** or *nguena*—the royal clan), fish (*sabi*, or in the Bisa country *tembo*), lion (*nkalamo*), leopard (*ngo**), otter (*mbao*), rat (*mpuku*), frog (*luo*), bees (*kashimu*), elephant (*nsofu*), wild pig (*ngulube* or *Cabala** or *nama*), tortoise (*Nkamba*), goat (*mlbushi*), dog (*mbwa*), honey-bird (*nguni*): millet (*bea**), porridge (*bwali*), mushroom (3 clans—*boa*, the ordinary word for mushroom, *mwansa*, a special type of mushroom, and *ngona*, the Bisa mushroom clan), grass (*kani*, diminutive of *cani*), gourd (*lunda*), castor-oil seed (*mono*), wild loquat (*mumba** or *Cilufya*), tree or drum clan (*ngoma* or *muti* in Bisa country), beans (*nkanda**): iron (*mbulo*), rain (*mfula*), anthill (*culu*), male genitals (*membe*), female genitals (*nkashi*), lamentations (*nkonde** 614 or *misoa*), pot (*inongo*). It is interesting to note 171 that some of the names are words no longer in common use, *i.e.*, those marked with an asterisk, and that the majority of these titles are found widely spread among those Rhodesian tribes which claim an origin from the Luba-speaking peoples in the Cong[illegible]ch as the Kaonde, Bisa, Ushi, Unga, etc. This is especially true of the

[p. 189(A)]

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oldest clan names (*bwali*, *ngandu*, *sabi*, *ngulube*, *boa*, *ngona*, *mumba*, etc.)[5]

Some of these *mukoa* names are accounted for by a story describing the original splitting off of a lineage group to form a new clan. For instance, natives say that the ancestors of the lamentations clan (*akonde*) were once members of the wild loquat clan (*mumba*) who had settled far away from the parent village. One of their members died but the rest of the *Bena mumba* refused to come and wail at the funeral. Hence a split took place between the two groups, and the younger branch declared, 'We must wail for 'ourselves now. Truly we are a clan of mourners.' Other stories are so uncomplimentary that they are narrated only by members of other clans, *e.g.*, that of the mushroom clan (*Ngona*), the royal clan of the Bisa, said by some to describe the splitting off of the Bemba proper from the Bisa during the original migration into the country. In this instance the ancestress of the present mushroom clan refused food to a hungry child of the royal or crocodile clan of the Bemba, declaring the pot she carried on her head was empty. But she stumbled and fell and the pot rolled off her head and was shown to be full of mushrooms. Hence, so the Bemba Paramount chief declares, 'We said; You clear off now and 'leave us alone. You have refused our child food. 'We call you the mushroom people now.'

Other *mukoa* names are actually those of the original ancestor of the clan itself, usually used as an alternative title, *e.g.*, Cilufya, an ancestor of the wild loquat clan, and a name less commonly used for it. In some cases I could get no story of the origin of the clan names.

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The *banungwe* of each clan are those whose object 'by its nature is hostile to or dependent 'on or complementary to one's own.'[6] For instance, the crocodile and fish clans are *banungwe* to each other since crocodiles live on fish; the

[5] The *Mukoka* or matrilineal clans of the Lamba include 15 of the same clan names. *Cf. vide* Doke, *op. cit.*, p. 196.

I have not used the word 'totem' for these clan-name objects since the use of the *mukoa* name is not associated with any special cult of the animal or plant, with a taboo on its use, legends of descent from the object, or identification of the clan members with the species of animal or plant, or indeed any of the features considered characteristic of totemism as described in such classical areas as Australia, or N. America.

[6] E. B. H. Goodall, *loc. cit.* Some identical pairs are recorded by Doke among the Lamba, *op. cit.* p. 197.

[p. 189(B)]

614 616 mushroom and rain clans are similarly paired since mushrooms cannot grow without rain; the porridge and the pot are equally essential to each other.

It will be seen that as it exists at the present day, this system of opposite or complementary clans can hardly be described as a form of dual organization, since each *mukoa* is not systematically paired, but has often a number of different partners linked by the apparently arbitrary factor of the clan name. The man's and the woman's clans are separately paired, it is true, and each has no other *banungwe*, but the rain clan (*mfula*) counts as its opposite numbers all the clans with plant names (the millet clans, the gourd, the mushroom clans, the grass, the tree, etc.) since plants cannot grow without rain. The fish clan members are also *banungwe* to the rain people, since fish only spawn when the rain has begun to fall. The iron people reckon themselves *banungwe* to members of all clans with the names of animals hunted or killed with iron spears or arrows, *i.e.*, the elephant, lion, leopard, etc. The animal clans also have reciprocal relations not only with the iron people, but with any *mukoa* named after an animal smaller than itself which forms its prey (*e.g.*, the lion and goat) or with the vegetable names in the case of a herbivorous species (*e.g.*, elephant and grass, etc.). The members of the mourning clan laughingly assert they are *banungwe* of all the clans since they are experts in mortuary ritual! —one of the reciprocal functions performed by *banungwe*.

614 616 T64 What are the reciprocal functions the *banungwe* perform for each other? Their ceremonial duties are chiefly confined to funeral rites.[7] The *banungwe* of a dead man's family both help and harass him at the burial ceremony. When the mourner's party has set off with the corpse to the grave-yard a man and a woman of any of the opposite clans remain behind to whitewash the hut contaminated by the touch of death, and to open the door for the wailers as they return. This is an unpleasant duty since contact with death necessitates subsequent purification. It is, moreover, a task which cannot be performed by members of the dead man's own clan. When the burial is over and the question of inheritance

[7] It is interesting to note that the legends of origin of the Lamba *mukoa* usually refer to the behaviour of the clan ancestors on their return from a funeral. C. Doke, *op. cit.*, p. 193.

[p. 190(A)]

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has finally been settled the *banungwe* are again essential. They have also to brew the beer for the feast held for the kinsmen on such occasions. Besides these necessary ritual functions which people perform for their *banungwe*, they also taunt them at the funeral, irritate them and make jokes. Some of the opposite clan members must follow the burial party to the grave. The moment the body has been buried and earth piled over it in a mound, one of the *banungwe* breaks the silence with a sudden shout. He rails at the mourning family, mocks at them, and accuses them of having buried a live man. He calls out, 'You, there! Why do you bury a man 'who is alive? Listen to him knocking down 'there! Can't you hear him? He is asking 'for some snuff. You enemies, you! (the usual 'term applied by *banungwe* to each other). See 'what things you do! You go and bury live 'men!' The taunts are, of course, expected, but were received, at each funeral I attended, with a kind of horrified silence, till suddenly the tension broke, and the mourners who had been wailing for some six hours without break, began sheepishly to laugh, and broke into an unceremonious run back to the village, still pursued by shouts from the irrepressible *banungwe*, 'Look 'out you now! He has risen (*Kubuka*) from 'the grave, that man you buried. He is coming 'after you asking for porridge.'[8] Older natives say that the mourners were beaten by their *banungwe* in the old days and add that the latter were also responsible for handing over to the heirs the insignia of inheritance—the bow of the dead man, or the belt of the woman—but I never saw either of these customs practised myself.

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As ritually expressed the traditional attitude between *banungwe* is therefore one of hostility, and yet, as the complementary nature of the clan names imply, one of reciprocal service. *Banungwe* regularly address each other as 'You. 'my enemy!' (*Mwe mulwani mwe!*) and delight in laughter at the habits of the objects, whether animal or plant, of the opposite clan. A member of the crocodile clan will scoff at one of the fish people and deride him as, 'You! You are just 'my food ration!' (*poso*, the word used for a government ration given to employees). 'Come 'over here! I want to give you to my wife to 'cook.' The *munungwe* of the fish clan retaliates

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[8] The word *kubuka* is that used for a dead man's spirit which returns to haunt the living (a *ciwa*).

[p. 190(B)]

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with a derisive imitation of the slow ungainly walk of the crocodile and compares its gait with the speed of the fish. At the court of the Paramount Chief this type of joking relationship has been formalized, and the head of the fish clan, a *mukabilo*, or hereditary priest of the tribal ancestral spirits, must dramatize the joking antagonism between the two clans by appearing in special regalia each time he visits the chief, and threatening him with a broad-bladed fishing spear. On such occasions the Paramount is protected by the head of the dog clan, who has to dance in front of him, pretending to bark in defence of his master. The surrounding courtiers shout the praise names of the fish clan, and encourage the actors. Such a ceremony may be enacted some four or five times during one week during a session of the tribal council. It is never omitted, although performed with diminishing gusto as the week proceeds, and sometimes under modern conditions as a preface to some matter-of-fact discussion of tribal business under the Native Courts Ordinance.

FIG. 1. THE FISH CLAN MEMBER IN REGALIA THREATENING TO SPEAR THE CHIEF, WHO IS SEATED AT THE TOP OF THE MOUND PROTECTED BY THE DOG CLAN MEMBER (STANDING).

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In spite of the joking hostility, *banungwe* behave to each other with special ease and freedom.[9] They can demand privileges of each other and take each other's possessions. They can swear at each other obscenely (*kutuka nseli*), a form of injury for which the sufferer can claim legal redress as an ordinary rule. It is said that even a commoner may swear at his chief in this

[9] My native clerk, asked to type out some notes on *banungwe*, translated the term as 'totem friends.'

[p. 191(A)]

614 616 [789] fashion, if the two are *banungwe*, but I never heard this done. A man can also tease his *munungwe's* wife and pretend to make indecent proposals to her. Lastly, *banungwe* may call down curses on each other with impunity (*kulapishya*, a very serious curse believed to be fatal as among ordinary people). This is done nowadays jokingly at the time of the new moon. Time after time I have heard the crescent moon greeted by shouting children tearing round the village calling the names of their *banungwe*, saying, 'Moon! Come and eat the people of 'such and such a clan!'[10] *Banungwe* are said to be able to take each other's possessions without let or hindrance in joke at the time of the new moon. If a man seizes an axe from the hut of a member of an opposite clan, the owner has to redeem it with 1*s*. or some small coin. Men pretend to raid the huts of their female *banungwe*, and particularly to snatch any objects, clothes, or cooking pots, that may be set to dry on the roofs.[11]

[582] There seems also to be evidence that the *banungwe* relationship was originally associated with reciprocal marriage rights. An intelligent old chief told me, '*Banungwe* used to marry each 'other in the old days. It was specially good to 'do so. It was like the marriage of cross-'cousins.' Another elderly informant explained, 'The *Banungwe* are our wives because we knew 'each other a long while ago and because there 'is no in-law avoidance (*mako*) between us. We 'used to exchange each other in the old days.[12] 'That is why there is no *mako*. All those 'women (*i.e.*, the *banungwe*) are our wives.' The younger native does not give a retrospective explanation of this sort but merely laughs and says he can shout at his mother-in-law if he has married a *munungwe*. It does not matter what

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[10] The Bemba usually curse by Lesa, the High God, or by the ancestral spirits of dead chiefs. I only heard cursing by the moon on such occasions.

[171] [11] The available data shows us that the Bakaonde also tease members of their opposite clan (*e.g.*, birds and kaffir corn clans, etc.) whom they call *Bunungwe*, which Melland translates as 'tease or victim.' He mentions small gifts such as beads, honey, or beer given by the chaffed man to the joker. Melland, *op. cit.*, p. 252. The Lamba clans are paired in opposites known as *awalongo*, some pairs resembling the complementary clans of the Bemba, and Doke states that the opposition between two clans is to-day confined to jesting, *op. cit.*, p. 197.

[12] For exchange he used the reciprocal form of *Kusalushya*—to exchange, *i.e.*, *Kusalushyana*—this word being used for marketing or bartering goods.

[p. 191(B)]

614 616 he says to her. There is no *mako*. It is common, too, to hear jokes between men and women in the *mununguwe* relationship. To call to a girl of an opposite clan, 'Come here! You, my enemy! 'You, my wife! Come into my hut!' is a favourite form of flirtation.

To summarize, the *banungwe* relationship among the Bemba implies ritual interdependence, a partnership of enemies, expressed in ritual, traditional jokes and freedom in daily intercourse, and preferential marriage claims, no longer exacted, but still reflected in flirtatious behaviour between the two sexes of opposite clans. What seemed to me incomprehensible at first was that a reciprocal clan relationship which prescribed so many types of human behaviour should be based on the apparently arbitrary factor of a clan name and the qualities of the clan object, *e.g.*, the power of the rain to make the mushrooms grow, or the fish spawn. How could the reciprocal responsibility for mortuary ritual and preferential marriage rights between members of opposite clans depend on a system of grouping in which each *mukoa* had a number of possible *banungwe*, and, as afterwards transpired, its members were often doubtful as to exactly who these were?

Further comparative material will probably throw light on this problem. My own tentative explanation is that the pairing of the clans on the basis of the complementary or hostile nature of the animals or plants they are named after, has been extended far beyond its original use by a process of analogy, and that the introduction of reading and writing has accelerated this extension in an interesting way. I think there is evidence that the *banungwe* were originally pairs of matrilineal clans established in one locality, and that their relationship can only be explained by a knowledge of the Bemba method of conquest of their present territory, and their religious concepts as to the tutelary deities attached to different localities. Tradition describes the first immigration of this tribe from the Congo into their present territory in small lineage groups which settled, grew in numbers, split and then moved on. Sometimes a group found the land empty and sometimes another small band of kinsmen the '*Bena* so and so' were discovered in occupation. In the latter case the new immigrants were dependent, according to Bemba belief, on the first settlers to carry out the rites of propitiation to the ancestral spirits attached to that tract of land. With these prayers for general blessings were often

614 616 173

614 associated the duty of burying the chief of the
616 new arrivals, usually the conquering group.
173 This fact is mentioned in a number of legends of the immigration of the Bemba and kindred tribes. The first Citimukulu, or Paramount Chief, is said to have died on the march and was buried by an old man, a member of the millet clan, whom he found in possession of a grove of
614 trees there. A member of the millet clan is still
616 appointed as the *Shimwalule*, or hereditary
767 burier, of the principal chiefs of the Bemba to-day, and he is still responsible for the final and most powerful rain ceremony, when the prayers of the Paramount himself have failed. The mortuary ritual of the Bemba chiefs is so complex, and there are so many hereditary officials responsible for it, that the millet clan are never described simply as the *banungwe* of the royal crocodile clan, but among the kindred Bisa tribes living in smaller groups near L. Bangweolu, we find to-day the hereditary burier of the chief always drawn from one clan and always responsible for the annual prayers for the fertility of the land, his clan definitely described as the first occupiers of the territory, and moreover as the *banungwe* of the royal clan. Thus Chief Matipa on Cilubi Island is buried by the head of the Wild Pig clan (*ngulube*) who are *banungwe* of the royal clan of that island, which is the tree clan (*ngoma*), the descendents of conquering immigrants who arrived about a century ago. This hereditary burier is in charge of the sowing and first-fruit ceremonies in this island and not the chief.

614 This seems to me to throw light on the original
616 pairing of opposite clans. From the same area comes a legend of the successive settlement of
173 two groups which suggest a possible reason why
184 preferential marriage rights should be associated with reciprocal burial duties, or at any rate embodies the traditional native explanation of the custom. The Bisa, living under Chief Nsamba in the L. Bangweolu district say the *Bena Nkashi* (woman's clan), came up the river first to their island. Then the *Bena Mfula* (rain clan) came in canoes. They ate with the *Bena Nkashi* and started to move off. But the head of the local group said, 'Stay here. We are alone here. We have no women here. Let us live together.' And the newcomers agreed. So the rain clain gave the sister of their chief in marriage to the head of the woman's clan. When the latter died he had no heirs of his own to bury him, so members of the rain clan buried him. Later another

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8: Richards E-5 (1930-1934)1937
FQ5 Bemba FQ5
Bisa

group of immigrants arrived, the *Bena Ngoma* (tree clan, that of the present Bisa chiefs of the district). They found the rain clan in possession, and begged them to pray to the spirits of the land 'since they were the owners of the land' and to bury their chiefs. The story ends, 'So 'the rain clan are the priests (*shimiapepo*) here 'to-day. They are the *Banungwe* of the woman 'clan. They took their wives from them. They 'are also the *banungwe* of the tree clan.'

It is impossible to speak with certainty as to the origin of the *Banungwe* relationship, but these living traditions as to the ritual interdependence and marriage exchanges of pairs of matrilineal lineage groups settled in one locality in the early days of the occupation of the country seem to throw out clues. Once the clan names, usually bestowed as we have seen, from some legend as to the split or amalgamation of two local groups, became linked in traditional linguistic forms (praise-names, ceremonial utterances, formalized jokes, etc.), as complementary or hostile, the extension of the *banungwe* concept to the classification of other clan objects would follow readily. I have no evidence that this process took place in the past, but I have seen it occurring to-day. A native, asked the *banungwe* of such and such a clan, gives one or two pairs automatically, and these are invariably among the oldest clans, with well-known legends of origin and local centres. Then he stops to think and adds more names, and then proceeds to argue with himself, for instance, that if iron is

[p. 193(A)]

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hostile to the elephant, it must be the enemy of the leopard, the wild pig or the lion too. This process of extension of the term *banungwe* to all clans named after objects considered complementary or hostile in their nature is seen most strikingly in the case of educated Bemba, who like to make careful lists of all the possible pairs of clans and reach a far greater number than those supplied by an illiterate old native. The fact that the grouping of opposite clans no longer regulates marriage or is based on local residence, but is limited to ceremonial functions and a pleasant teasing form of intercourse, makes this apparently arbitrary classification easier. The fact that it is in the name of the *mukoa* object, together with the traditional fiction of descent in legal affiliation which forms the distinguishing mark of Bemba clan membership rather than local association and ownership of land or property, material or immaterial, also makes it comprehensible that the *banungwe* concept should be readily extended to other clans beyond those first historically paired. Whether a similar process of extension of the paired clan idea took place in the past as each new lineage group grew and became differentiated, it is impossible to know, but it is worth inquiring whether, in contiguous areas where reciprocal clan relationships are found, there are also legends of origin of paired lineage groups, locally associated, with the one dependent on the other to secure the blessings of the Tutelary deities attached to the land.

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